

WORLD 5 KUWAIT'S RULING EMIR DIES AT AGE 86
MONEY 6 EMPLOYEES FEEL SHORT NAP BREAKS ESSENTIAL: SURVEY
SPORT 8 INDIA WOMEN PULVERISE ENGLAND BY 347 RUNS

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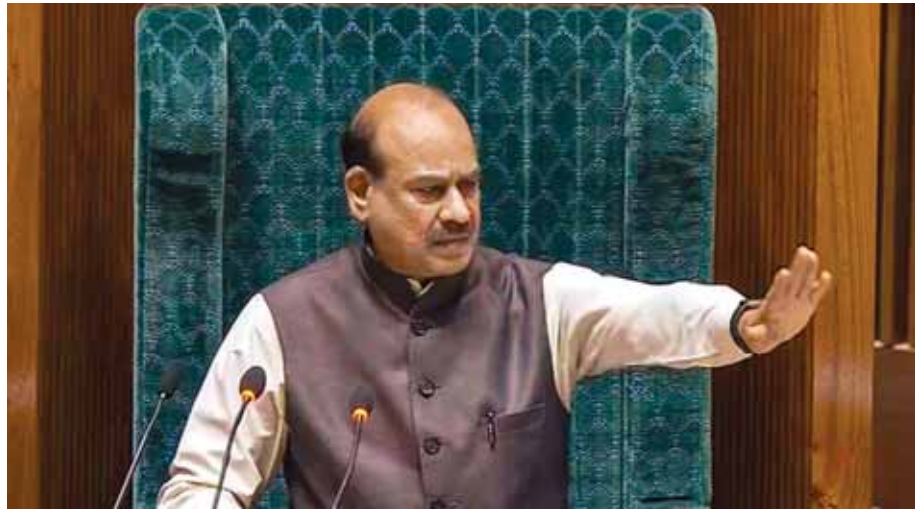
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LS Speaker for probe into security breach

RAJESH KUMAR/PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday informed members of the House he has formed a "high-powered committee" to review various aspects of security in the Parliament complex and formulate an action plan to ensure that the December 13 incident is not repeated. In a letter to Lok Sabha members, Birla also said the report of the high-level inquiry committee set up by the Union Home Ministry will "soon" be shared with the House. "In addition, I have also constituted a High Powered Committee which will review various aspects of security in the Parliament Complex and formulate a concrete action plan to ensure that such incidents do not recur," he said in the letter. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police Special Cell intensified its crackdown on the accused involved in the Parliament security breach. On Saturday, they arrested the sixth accused, identified as Mahesh Kumawat. Police sources said Kumawat has been charged with the destruction of evidence and criminal conspiracy. Sources said all five accused will be taken to their native places for evidence recovery and interrogation. Additionally, the police plan to record the statement of BJP MP Pratap Simha, in whose name authorisation was issued to two



intruders. Furthermore, the police are planning to recreate the crime scene inside the Lok Sabha. During court arguments for remand and further interrogation, the Delhi Police informed the court that the custody of the accused was required "to find the actual motive behind the attack and his association with an enemy country and terrorist organisations." The prosecutor told the court that Kumawat had been in contact with other accused persons in hatching the conspiracy for the last two years. He assisted the mastermind, Lalit Jha, in destroying the mobile phone to eliminate evidence and hide the larger conspiracy. The prosecutor added Kumawat needs to be questioned to unearth the entire

conspiracy. Kumawat had voluntarily come to a police station with Lalit Jha on Thursday night, and both were handed over to the Special Cell. He has been under questioning since then. The police revealed he was a member of the now-deleted Bhagat Singh Fan Club page created by the accused. The initial investigation by Delhi Police has revealed that one of the two intruders involved in the security breach and dramatic protest in the Lok Sabha on December 13 had travelled and lived in Cambodia for a brief period, reportedly working as an aid work volunteer after dropping out from an engineering course. It has been revealed that Manoranjan Devaraj, 33, a res-

ident of Mysuru and one of the main intruders, had traveled to Cambodia via Bangkok around 2014 to work as a volunteer, as per his international travel records. His travel details are being verified by investigating agencies. The police are also checking if there is a foreign funding angle in this case. Sources said that the five accused revealed that they explored self-immolation and distribution of pamphlets before settling on the plan to jump into the Lok Sabha's chamber with smoke canisters. A Delhi Police official said, "Before finalising this plan (to jump into the Lok Sabha chamber), they (the accused) had explored certain ways that could be impactful in sending their message to the government."

They first explored immolating themselves by covering their bodies with fireproof gel but dropped this idea. They also considered distributing pamphlets inside Parliament but finally went ahead with the plan they executed on Wednesday, the official said. Furthermore, the police will be taking all five accused to their native places for evidence recovery and interrogation. Lalit Jha will also be taken to Rajasthan, where he had fled after the incident. The police will seek Parliamentary approval to recreate the incident that took place on the anniversary of the 2001 attack. The sources also said they may record the statement of BJP MP Pratap Simha, in whose name authorisation was passed to two intruders. Apart from this, the accused had also planned to start a political outfit. However, for this, they wanted to garner media attention. They felt that by breaching the security of Parliament, their purpose would be met, one of the accused informed the police. The four accused — Neelam, Amol, Sagar Sharma, and Manoranjan — had arrived with seven smoke cans to carry out the incident. Notably, Sagar, along with another accused, Manoranjan D, had allegedly popped the canisters carrying yellow smoke in the Parliament on December 13, the day the country observes the anniversary of the 2001 Parliamentary attack.

PM Modi flags off Viksit Bharat Yatra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his commitment begins where hope from everyone else ends, emphasising that the development of smaller cities is central to his vision of making India a developed country. Addressing the beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra through video conferencing, the Prime Minister remarked, "With the resolve for a developed India, 'Modi's guarantee vehicle' is reaching every corner of the country." "In just one month, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra has reached thousands of villages and cities, with a focus on small towns, he added. Modi highlighted that his government is working to alleviate the challenges faced by all, treating them like family members. "Our government has assisted the poor, farmers, small businesses, and various other sections of society. Modi's guarantee comes into play when hope from everyone else ends," he affirmed. The Prime Minister acknowledged that for a long time after independence, the benefits of development were confined to a few big cities. However, his government is now concentrating on the development of smaller cities,



which will fortify the foundation for a developed India. He encouraged everyone to take advantage of various government schemes. "Although Modi initiated the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, he noted that today, the countrymen have taken charge of the journey. At a point where the journey pauses, people from other villages or cities start leading it," he stated. Modi also launched the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram, where recent Assembly elections were held. "The yatra, initially launched in other States, faced delays in these five States due to the model code of conduct during the elections. During the event, Modi interacted with beneficiaries from various States who have availed themselves of various government schemes. He praised the

"atma nirbhar" women of the country, highlighting their role in sustaining themselves and becoming a boon for others. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri stated that everyone's work is now expedited as the people of the country have become "Modiji's VIP". Modi, who has called for making India a developed nation by 2047, engaged with the beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra via video conferencing. Thousands of beneficiaries from across the country participated in the event, joined by a large number of Union Ministers, MPs, MLAs, and local representatives. "The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra aims to achieve the saturation of flagship government schemes by ensuring their benefits reach all targeted beneficiaries in a time-bound manner."

Congress prepares for crowdfunding campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's historic 'Tilak Swaraj Fund' in 1920-21, the Congress on Saturday announced to launch on December 18 its nationwide 'Donate for Desh' crowdfunding campaign ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. It said the initiative aims to empower the party in creating an India that is rich in equal resource distribution and opportunities. The campaign will be launched by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge in Delhi. During a Press conference at the Congress headquarters, party general secretary KC Venugopal and Treasurer Ajay Maken said Indians above the age of 18 can donate a minimum of ₹138 or in multiples of ten, such as ₹1,380. "Our inaugural campaign — 'Donate for Behtar Bharat' — commemorates the 138-year journey of the Indian National Congress. Embracing our history, we invite supporters to donate in multiples of ₹138, symbolising the party's enduring commitment to a better India," Venugopal said. The party has created two online channels for the crowdfunding campaign — a dedicated portal at donateinc.in and the official Congress website at inc.in. All Pradesh Congress Committee presidents will raise awareness about the campaign through press conferences and social media, he said, adding it will primarily online until December 28, the party's foundation day. After that, ground campaigns, including door-to-door visits by volunteers, targeting at least 10 houses in every booth for contributions of at least Rs 138 from each, will be launched. Venugopal said state-level office bearers, elected representatives, District Congress Committee presidents, PCC chiefs and AICC officials will be encouraged to contribute at least Rs 1,380 each. "For the campaign's effectiveness, all PCC presidents will identify potential donors," he said. Venugopal also announced a "mammoth rally" in Maharashtra's Nagpur on December 28 to mark the party's 138th foundation day. He said at least 10 lakh people will attend the historic rally.

Navy intercepts hijacked vessel in Arabian Sea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy swiftly responded to a maritime incident in the Arabian Sea involving the hijacking of a Malta-flagged vessel with 18 crew members on board. The Navy's maritime patrol aircraft undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden were deployed to locate and assist the vessel MV Ruen after receiving a distress call from it, Navy officials said here on Saturday. The hijacking attempt was reported on Thursday and the Indian Navy sent its mission deployed platforms to the area of the incident early on Friday, officials said. The Navy said its aircraft flew over the hijacked vessel and it has been continuously monitoring movement of the vessel, which is now heading towards the coast of Somalia. "Responding swiftly to the developing situation, the Indian Navy diverted its naval maritime patrol aircraft undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden to locate and assist MV Ruen," officials said. "The aircraft overflew the hijacked vessel on early morning of December 15 and the aircraft has been continuously monitoring movement of the vessel, which is now heading towards the coast of Somalia," they said. Officials said the Indian Navy's warship deployed in the Gulf of Aden for anti-piracy patrol also intercepted the MV Ruen on Saturday morning. The overall situation is being closely monitored, in coordination with other agencies in the area, he said. "The Indian Navy remains committed to being a first responder in the



MV Ruen, a vessel with 18 crew onboard, that had sent a Mayday message indicating boarding by approx six unknown personnel. Indian Navy diverted its Naval Maritime Patrol aircraft undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on Anti Piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden to locate & assist MV Ruen PTI

region and ensuring safety of merchant shipping, along with international partners and friendly foreign countries," the official said. MV Ruen, the vessel, reportedly lost control on Thursday, in a first significant piracy incident recorded after 2017. The attack has highlighted a major lapse in the ongoing anti-piracy efforts in the Arabian Sea. In response to the incident, the UK Marine Trade Operations issued a warning, urging vessels to exercise caution while traversing the Arabian Sea near Somalia. The Indian Navy is now on high alert in the region. Meanwhile, it has also advised ships to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

Minor marriage haunts modern India

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

After witnessing a decline in child marriage in India from 2006 to 2016, there is evidence of stagnation since then, as one in five girls and nearly one in six boys in India are still married below the legal age, with some States reporting a significant increase in such incidents. These grim findings are published in The Lancet Global Health, indicating a worrisome indicator that reflects the inadequacy of current policy designs. In fact, during the later years, the study notes that six



States/Union Territories (including Manipur, Punjab, Tripura, and West Bengal) saw an increase in girl child marriage and eight (including Chhattisgarh, Goa, Manipur, and Punjab) saw an increase in boy child marriage. In recent years, the practice has become more prevalent in some States/Union Territories, as per

the study led by researchers at Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. India's success in eliminating child marriage is crucial to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal target 5.3. Child marriage is a human rights violation and a recognised form of gender and sexual-based violence. "This study is among the first to estimate how rates of girl and boy child marriage have changed over time at a state/union territory level. Boy child marriage in particular is often overlooked; to date, there has been almost no research

estimating its prevalence," said lead author SV Subramanian, Professor of population health and geography. "Our findings offer a big step forward in understanding the burden of child marriage in India — one that will be critical to effective policymaking," he said. Using data from all five waves of India's National Family Health Survey, from 1993, 1999, 2006, 2016, and 2021, they estimated the number of men and women ages 20-24 who met that definition across State/Union Territories. Continued on Page 2

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13 States, UTs achievers in logistics performance index

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh, and Gujarat are among the 13 states and Union Territories that have again been categorised as "achievers" in the logistics index chart 2023, according to a report released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on Saturday. The index is an indicator of the efficiency of logistical services necessary for promoting exports and economic growth. As against 15 states and UTs, this year, the number has reduced to 13 as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand have slipped into "aspirers" and "fast movers" categories, respectively, this year. Steps taken by Sikkim and Tripura have helped them move up the ladder to the "achievers" category from "fast movers" in 2022. The other states and UTs in the "achievers" category are Delhi, Assam, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry have been categorised as "fast movers" in the report. Those in the "aspirers" category include Goa, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. The report ranks states on the basis of their logistics ecosystem, highlights the key logistics-related challenges faced by the stakeholders and includes suggestive recommendations, according to the fifth LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) 2023 report unveiled by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. The index aims at enhancing focus on improving logistics performance across states, which is essential for improving the country's trade and reducing transaction costs. Goyal said the logistics sector will play a key role in taking the country's economy to about USD 35 trillion by 2047. Citing a report of economic think tank NCAER, he said the country's logistics cost is estimated in the range of 7.8 per cent to 8.9 per cent. "Going forward, the aim to bring it down to the 5-6 per cent level is certainly doable," he

said, adding that the government has taken a series of measures, such as investing huge amounts in infrastructure development to help promote cut logistics costs. He suggested the industry to focus on skilled manpower, enhanced participation of states, use of new technologies like AI, blockchain and data analytics, and steps to reduce carbon footprint will further help in the growth of the country's logistics sector. The minister said the LEADS report will play a pivotal role in instilling healthy competition among states/UTs to enhance logistics performance. LEADS was conceived on the lines of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) of the World Bank in 2018. While the LPI relies entirely on perception-based surveys, LEADS incorpo-



rates perception and objectivity, thereby enhancing the robustness and comprehensiveness of this exercise. The report assesses states' performance across the key pillars of Logistics Infrastructure, Logistics Services and Operating and Regulatory Environment, and empowers the state/UT governments by providing region-specific insights for informed decision-making and comprehensive growth. It is based on a pan-India primary survey conducted between May and July 2023, covering over 7,300 responses across 36 states/UTs. Additionally, over 750 stakeholder consultations, facilitated by National, Regional, and State Associations, significantly contributed to this comprehensive evaluation.



Using of sugarcane juice for making ethanol approved

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 The food ministry has issued a fresh order reversing ban on the use of sugarcane juice for making ethanol and allowed utilisation of the juice as well as B-heavy molasses to produce the green fuel in the 2023-24 supply year. The revised order comes days after the Centre on December 7 banned use of sugarcane juice and sugar syrup for the 2023-24 supply year (November-October) in an order to ensure adequate sugar supply in the domestic market and check prices. In a directive issued to all sugar mills and distilleries, the ministry said the oil marketing companies (OMCs) will issue a "revised allocation" of "sugarcane juice and B heavy molasses-based ethanol" for the 2023-24 supply year to "each distillery". OMCs have been asked to inform the food ministry after placement of revised contracts. After receiving the revised allocation, sugar mills and distilleries have been asked to supply ethanol strictly as per the revised quantity of cane juice and B-heavy molasses. "No diversion of sugarcane juice and B heavy molasses is allowed for production of rectified spirit and extra neutral alcohol," the directive said. All molasses-based distilleries will endeavour to make ethanol from C-heavy molasses, it added. A decision in this regard, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said, was taken in the meeting of a committee of ministers held on Friday. He said the government has decided to give flexibility to use both cane juice and B heavy molasses within an overall cap on diversion of sugar of up to 17 lakh tonnes in the current 2023-24 supply year. Already 6 lakh tonnes of sugar has been diverted for making ethanol from cane juice before the ban, another food ministry official had said. The government has estimated sugar production to decline to 32.3-33 million tonnes in the 2023-24 season (October-September) as against 37.3 million tonnes in the previous season.

FCI sells 4.29 lakh MT wheat in Bengal through e-auction

PTI ■ KOLKATA
 The Food Corporation India (FCI) has sold 4.29 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and 14,760 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice through 25 open market e-auctions in West Bengal from June to December this year, an official of the agency said on Saturday. FCI Deputy General Manager (West Bengal region) Pradeep Singh said the Open Market Sales Scheme (domestic) had been done through the e-auction portal of M-junction. "In a bid to stabilise the prices of the cereals and also to increase affordability for the general public, the FCI has sold 4.29 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and 14,760 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice in West Bengal through 25 open-market e-auctions from June to December this year," Singh said. The FCI will also continue to supply the staples through the public distribution system (PDS) free of cost, he said. While the reserve price of wheat for e-auction sales is Rs 2,150 per quintal, it is Rs 2,900 per quintal for non-fortified rice. Singh said fortified rice is supplied through the PDS only, and not via the e-auction route. "West Bengal is a wheat-deficit state but self-sufficient in rice production. For the state, wheat is procured from Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh at the prevailing minimum support price



(MSP) of Rs 2,275 per quintal for marketing season 2024-25," he said. While wheat is procured from the farmers during the Rabi season, rice is purchased during the Kharif season, he said. According to the official, differentiation in the quantum of purchase of wheat and rice through the e-auction route has also been made for big and small processing units. Singh said the FCI has also asked the processors not to hold stocks over and above the monthly processing capacity while bidding for tenders. He said the next scheduled e-auction will be held on December 20, when 30,000 metric tonnes of wheat and 9,000 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice will be offered for sale through the open market route in West Bengal. Every week, a similar amount of wheat is offered for sale through the open market, he added.



Honda Elevate crosses 20,000 sales mark

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Honda Cars India on Saturday said its mid-sized Sports Utility Vehicle Elevate has crossed 20,000 sales mark since its launch in the domestic market in September this year. The new model accounted for over 50 per cent of total company sales in the last three months and has helped the company grow its sales by 11 per cent in the September-November period as compared with the same period last year, the automaker said in a statement. "We have maximised the production of the Elevate to serve our waiting customers as early as possible and adjusted the variant mix to align with the market demand which is overwhelmingly high for CVT variants currently," Honda Cars India Director (Marketing and Sales) Yuichi Murata said. India is the first country to manufacture and sell the Elevate globally. Honda also aims to make India an important export hub for the new model to other parts of the world, catering to the robust demand for SUVs globally.

ESIC to set up 9 hospitals in Maharashtra, MP, Uttarakhand



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has decided to set up nine hospitals in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and 17 new dispensaries in Gujarat. The decision was taken in the 192nd Meeting of Employees' State Insurance Corporation held on Friday at ESIC Headquarters under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Labour and Employment Bhupendra Patel. Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teji also attended the meeting as Vice-Chairman. According to a labour ministry statement issued late in the evening on Friday, nine new ESIC hospitals in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and 17 new dispensaries in Gujarat will be set up under the ESIC Scheme to improve the healthcare infrastructure. To neutralise the impact of inflation, the proposal to increase the basic rate of Permanent Disablement Benefit (PDB) and Dependant's Benefit (DB) was also approved by ESIC Corporation, the statement said. The PDB is paid at the rate of 90 per cent of wages in the form of monthly payments, depending upon the extent of loss of earning capacity as certified by a Medical Board. The DB is paid at the rate of 90 per cent of the wage in the form of monthly payment to the dependants of a deceased insured person in cases where death occurs due to employment injury or occupational hazards. However, the statement did not mention the earlier rate of PDB and DB. The ESIC also decided to increase the number of beds in its hospitals in Bibewadi, Maharashtra, and Rourkela, Odisha. The sanctioned bed strength is set to increase from 100 to 120 and from 75 to 150 in ESIC hospital in Bibewadi and Rourkela, respectively, as ESIC Corporation accorded the approval for the same during the meeting, the statement noted. To provide all the super speciality treatment facilities hassle-free and under one roof, the proposal for the development of ESIC Hospital Andheri, Mumbai, as a multi-speciality hospital with a capacity of 500 beds was approved, it stated. The step is taken to modernise the facilities in the hospital to provide IPs (insured persons) and their dependents with modern treatment facilities.

Reliance General Insurance unveils global health policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Reliance General Insurance Company Ltd (RGICL) on Saturday said it has launched a new policy to make global healthcare accessible to Indians. The policy, Reliance Health Global, provides comprehensive cover not only within the borders of India but across the world, RGICL said in a statement. The policy will cover expenses for overseas treatment, including critical illnesses like cancer and bypass surgery, it added. It also encompasses travel, accommodation, and end-to-end Visa and assistance



services, addressing emergencies like lost passports or emergency cash, apart from sum-insured coverage of up to USD 1 million, the company said. The new product also offers benefits ranging from air ambulance to organ donor expenses with no restrictions on room rent. "As India globalises and a lot of Indians keep travelling abroad for work or leisure it's imperative to remove their pain of buying multiple policies separately for India and overseas," Reliance General Insurance CEO Rakesh Jain said. Reliance General Insurance, a subsidiary of Reliance Capital, is one of India's leading general insurance companies. The company offers a well-rounded and comprehensive bouquet of products, including motor insurance, health insurance, travel insurance, and home insurance.

Volkswagen ties up with Govt for its vehicle scheme

PTI ■ CHENNAI
 Automaker Volkswagen India has partnered with Centre's Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandar scheme to offer its products to personnel of central security agencies and their families. Under this initiative, Volkswagen India is making its entire range of cars available to beneficiaries of the KPKB scheme across the country. The KPKB scheme was launched as a welfare initiative by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2006. It caters to serving and retired members of the Central



Armed Police Forces and their families. Aimed at enhancing the accessibility of its portfolio of cars, this new initiative enables beneficiaries to experience world-class mobility with an even more reasonable price tag, the company said in a statement. Volkswagen retails the mid-size sedan Virtus, sports utility vehi-

cle Taigun, and its premium SUV Tiguan in India. Some of the security forces covered under the scheme include the Border Security Forces, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, and Indo-Tibetan Border Force among others. The scheme benefits are also extended to the personnel of State Police Forces, the Railway Protection Force, the Intelligence Bureau, the Special Protection Group, the National Crime Records Bureau, and the National Investigation Agency, it added.

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Employees feel short nap breaks essential: Survey

PTI ■ MUMBAI
 A large number of employees believe that short nap breaks during office hours help battle fatigue and also increase efficiency and well-being of workers, according to a survey. The practice of 'inemuri', which involves taking short nap breaks during office hours while remaining present in the workplace, has been a long-standing tradition in Japan. It is essential for a healthy work culture, battling exhaustion and fatigue in daily work routines and increase efficiency and employees' well-being, said a report by staffing solutions and HR services provider Genius Consultants. Around 94 per cent of employees surveyed believe that short nap breaks during office hours are essential, whereas only 3 per cent of the respondents dis-



agreed with this sentiment, the report said. This highlights the stress and burnout scenario experienced by employees on a regular basis, which makes them want resting breaks during work hours, it added. The report is based on an online survey among 1,207 employees from September 25 to October 27, across sectors, including banking and finance, construction and engineering, education, FMCG, hospitality, HR solutions, IT, ITES and BPO, logistics, manufacturing, media, oil and gas, and pharma. The report further said that 82 per cent of respondents believe short nap breaks in the office can lead to an increase in overall work efficiency. However, 12 per cent do not share the same view. Meanwhile, the report also found that 60 per cent of employees frequently experi-

ence high levels of exhaustion and fatigue throughout their daily work routines. On the other hand, 27 per cent of respondents said they never encountered such pronounced feelings of tiredness during their workdays, it said. Nearly half of the employees (49 per cent) expressed their willingness to extend their working hours by one hour if they are provided with a one-hour nap break during office hours. However, 36 per cent of respondents are not comfortable with this proposition. At least 78 per cent employees believe 'inemuri' can contribute to work satisfaction and enhance employee well-being. Over 64 per cent employees believe that short nap breaks after office hours can help individuals achieve a better work-life balance, while 21 per cent do not see any benefit of 'inemuri', the report said. "The findings of our recent report shed light on the evolving attitudes towards workplace well-being. The data, showcasing an overwhelming 94 per cent of employees supporting short nap breaks during office hours, demonstrates the growing acceptance of this practice in today's work culture. "These insights reveal the potential for enhancing work efficiency, fostering employee satisfaction, and achieving a healthier work-life balance," Genius Consultants Chairman and Managing Director R P Yadav said.

"What I love about being an actress is being able to really look into myself and understand another human being"
— Phylicia Rashad



UTTARKASHI HEROES IN OBLIVION

National heroes just 15 days ago, rat-hole miners now face the struggle for livelihood as their days of glory wane, writes **ASAD**

Every story, no matter how remarkable, eventually fades from people's minds, and the same goes for the 12 rat-hole miners who played the last crucial role in rescuing 41 workers trapped in the Uttarkashi tunnel 20 days ago. In a last-ditch effort to free the workers trapped underground since November 12, the rat-hole miners dug more than 10 metres in just 48 hours at the Silkyara tunnel in Uttarkashi. This finally resolved the tense situation on November 28, with the media closely watching the rescue operation. Before this success, six different plans were attempted, including drilling from three locations in different ways, but none of them worked. Even when the rescuers were feeling unsure, hesitant to give a definite timeline for finishing the colossal task, international tunnelling professional Arnold Dix said, "It may take some time, perhaps up to a month, but I cannot specify the exact timeline. Rushing the process is not advisable. The priority is the safe return of these men, and I am confident they will be home for Christmas." In this setting, where even the rescue experts were losing hope, the rat-hole miners swooped in and lifted everyone's spirits. On November 28, a burst of euphoria swept through as the news flashed: The beleaguered workers, ensnared in the tunnel, were freed. It marked the culmination of a 17-day-long marathon rescue operation — a testament to the unwavering determination and collaborative effort of five agencies involved, including NDRF, SDRF, Indian Army, micro-tunnelling expert Chris Cooper and other State and Central agencies. The heroic efforts of the rat-hole miners garnered not only praise but also captured the spotlight of the media, propelling them into the esteemed status of national and international heroes. Their courageous actions resonated far and wide, casting them as symbols of inspiration and resilience on a global scale. Now, as those days of glory have passed, hailing from impoverished backgrounds, these people have begun to toil relentlessly, dedicating exhaustive hours to cleanse the sewer lines of Delhi.

The pursuit of a fresh livelihood has become their main concern. Sitting in a cozy little one room duplex in Khajoori Khas colony of Delhi, one miner Md Irshad Ansari who helped in the rescue said the claps and cheers they got did not last long. "Right now, we are putting in a lot of effort to earn a living, doing the same job of cleaning sewers. We had hoped that the significant event would lift us out of poverty," he shared. Another team member, Monu Kumar, residing in Uttar Pradesh, said people are showing love, and they have received some cheques, but they are not sufficient. He said after some time, the money will run out, and they will be back to their usual struggles. "We want the Government to provide us with some jobs to make life easier," he said. After their brave deed, about fifteen days later, the visits to their homes in Delhi have slowed down. Initially, there was a long line of well-wishers in the winding streets eager to congratulate them, but now, things have settled a bit. In the curvy lanes of the less fortunate neighbourhood, where life's essentials are hard to come by, people continue to recognise and appreciate their courageous acts. Their bravery has made a lasting mark in the community, keeping their neighbourhood well-known and respected. For days, they became the talk of the town in their close-knit community. Everybody eagerly approached, wanting to shake hands and exchange a few words with them. "They are good boys. Around 10 years ago, they were part of the team which had installed a sewer line in the colony, and we all still remember that. Now, they have done a remarkable job by saving the lives of the trapped miners. We are proud of them," said Israel, a resident who lives just a few lanes away from the house of 36-year-old Wakeel Hassan, the leader of the rat-hole miners' group. Rat-hole miners are skilled at getting coal from small, flat mines. They dig a narrow hole, about three to four feet wide, just big enough for one person to go down and collect coal. To make the hole, they use tools like pickaxes, shovels, and hammers. In 2014, the Meghalaya Government



THE STRUGGLING RAT-HOLE MINERS BELIEVE THAT DESPITE THEIR HARD WORK AND MEDIA ATTENTION SO FAR, THEY HAVE NOT BECOME TRUE HEROES WITH IMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES. THAT IS WHY THEY ARE SEIZING EVERY CHANCE TO GET THEIR STORIES COVERED IN THE MEDIA, HELP IN BUILDING THEIR NARRATIVE, AND A VIRAL REPORT MIGHT CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOREVER

put a stop to rat-hole mining. This decision followed a temporary ban from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) after a sad event in 2012. During that incident, 30 coal workers got stuck in a mine, and unfortunately, 15 lives were lost. Following the Uttarkashi tunnel rescue, the story took a turn as the rat-hole miners received praise, even from online users. A user on X enthusiastically posted, "Indian Jugad 'Rat-Hole-Mining' triumphs over Giant Augur machine!" This acclaim signifies the miners' resourcefulness and resilience in overcoming challenges, capturing the attention and praise of online communities. Away from the attention of the virtual world, the six rat-hole miners, gathered in a small room filled with people, are hopeful that media coverage would bring a positive turn to their luck, but now seem a bit sombre. Not much has drastically changed in their lives despite the initial burst of attention and joy. Many of them, migrants from Uttar Pradesh, journeyed to Delhi years ago with dreams of making it big and becoming wealthy. Unfortunately, fate had a different plan for them. Without formal education, they found themselves doing sewer work, hoping that

one day they could afford to own their own house. They settled in an unauthorised colony in Delhi's Khajoori Khas in 1992 or some later on, because that is what they could afford at the time. In the midst of his small home in Khajoori Khas, crowded with visitors and his family members all around, Wakeel stands out as the most polished among the rat-hole miners. Clad in a spotless white shirt and black trousers, clean-shaven, he takes the lead in interacting with the media, eloquently expressing the viewpoints of his fellow team members. As he chatted with the YouTubers and guests filling his home, his phone suddenly buzzed. Quickly grabbing it, a bright smile lit up his face as if he had stumbled upon a treasure. It was Akhilesh Yadav on the other end. Later, he shared that Akhilesh wanted to meet them to honour their efforts with a cash reward. The other five miners at the house, who had gathered to talk with the media, were overjoyed. But that was not sufficient; it was like a tiny drop in the vast ocean. The miners are yearning for more — a lasting solution to their poverty. They realise that if this golden opportunity slips away, they might remain in a state of destitution.

Their aspiration goes beyond just survival; they aim to step out of the challenging sewer work and embrace something more dignified. Like many middle-class Indians, they share the dream of providing their children with quality education, nutritious meals, and a comfortable home. The desire is vividly etched on their faces. "We have not received much. It feels like we have already been forgotten. We hope the Government pays attention to our situation and provides us with jobs so that our lives can stabilise," said Wakeel. Another rat-hole miner, Munna Qureshi, said for the last 14 days, they have had no permanent job. "Whatever money we got from well-wishers is now running out as we do not have a job right now. Our request is from the Governments to think about us also," he said. The first political bigwig to visit their home was the Delhi Congress president along with his team. They handed ₹5,000 to each of the six workers residing in Delhi. Soon after, the BJP team also paid a visit and gave them a more substantial amount of ₹25,000 each. Then, out of the blue, Wakeel said one day he received a call from Akhilesh Yadav, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and chairman of the Samajwadi Party, who offered them with ₹1 lakh each as token money for their courageous work. "We appreciate the recognition we have received, but what has come so far is like peanuts. As time goes by, it will be used up, and we will go back to our original work, living a life of hardship. We were invited by Indian Idol, and they gave us a ₹1 lakh cheque each, but we were told it would take months to cash it. The reality has hit all 12 of us that there is nobody recognising our work until now," said Wakeel. The struggling rat-hole miners believe that despite their hard work and media attention so far, they have not become true heroes with improved opportunities. That is why they are seizing every chance to get their stories covered in the media, help in building their narrative, and a viral report might change their lives forever, said one YouTuber who visited their house a few days ago for a story.

A message of transition in JNU

Contrary to negative narratives, JNU — a melting pot of Indian culture — celebrates its patriotism through a 'Wall of Heroes' dedicated to Param Vir Chakra awardees



BRAJESH KUMAR TIWARI

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) recently updated its logo and incorporated the tagline "Tamo Ma Jyotirgamaya." Until now, the logo did not feature a motto. The fundamental interpretation of "Tamo Ma Jyotirgamaya" is the transition from a state of darkness to a state of illumination. Undoubtedly, a logo is a crucial instrument that defines the theme of an organisation. When approached correctly, the essence of the logo plays a significant part in shaping the business' image and serves as a powerful means of conveying messages.

JNU has consistently maintained its position as one of the most esteemed universities in the nation. Since its establishment in 1969, JNU has continually strived for excellence, innovation, and intellect, earning a distinct reputation. It holds a unique and significant position in the realm of intellectual concepts. The university has consistently voiced its opinions on both domestic and global matters. However, certain individuals and even a majority of the media have persistently engaged in a biased campaign against the university, resulting in the fragmentation of its reputation into several factions.

The university has integrated concepts from Nalanda, Moscow, and Paris Universities, as well as the London School of Economics. JNU has facilitated access to high-quality education for students from families with limited resources, earning it the reputation of being widely regarded as the most affordable university in the nation.

In addition to the standard reservation policy, JNU is the sole educational institution that grants extra preference to women and students hailing from economically deprived and underdeveloped regions. Every aspiring student in the nation dreams of gaining admission to this university, believing that it will pave the way for unobstructed success in life. The current Vice Chancellor, Professor Shantishree Pandit, is a JNU alumna, and her understanding of the university's working style, excellence, and creativity is profound. Recently, the School of Indian Languages has been initiated to promote the Indian knowledge tradition.

In response to changing times, new schools such as Social Sciences, Modern Sciences, Ayurveda and Traditional Music, along with Modern Medicine, School of Management, and School of Engineering have been established in JNU. On one hand, there are hard-core UPSC aspirants, and on the other hand, there are research-oriented scholars. The credit for producing Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Nobel Laureates, and renowned bureaucrats goes to JNU, despite being criticised by some for allegedly harbouring anti-national sentiments. This institute, boasting more than eight thousand students and about 550 teachers, consistently ranks at the top in all of India's university rankings. In the National Institutional Ranking Framework by the Ministry of Education, JNU has consistently held the first position among all Central universities. Moreover, JNU has earned recognition as one of the premier universities globally.

The critical mindset here serves as an indicator of high intelligence. Grading is conducted throughout the semester, and the collaborative process of knowledge creation in the classroom is actively promoted. JNU openly discusses the relationship between academia and the outside world. In fact, JNU fosters the ability to question, debate, and embrace disagreement, which is why the university is renowned for lively discussions outside the classrooms. This vibrant atmosphere is consistently observed in cafeterias and dhabs. The JNU Library, one of the largest national libraries in the country, along with Parthasarathy Rocks (a small mound in the campus forest) and Ganga Dhaba, remain central to intellectual discussions. The insistence on delving into the heart of matters is a unique aspect of JNU.

Despite a few instances of abuse on the walls and the existence of a "TukdeTukde gang", it is unjust to label this esteemed university as anti-national. The actions of a small minority should not overshadow the fact that the majority of JNU students are bringing pride to the country through their achievements. Universities and students play a crucial role in nation-building. Every year, numerous JNU students join prestigious institutions such as Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy, Hyderabad Police Academy, and Foreign Services. JNU is proudly showcasing its success both within the country and abroad. In recent years, in addition to achieving top rankings in the Indian Economic Services, almost 70 per cent of the selected candidates were from JNU.

Today, JNU alumni occupy high-ranking positions in policy institutions and media. Many universities have JNU alumni serving as vice-chancellors, and key educational institutions boast presidents and directors with ties to JNU. Heads of States from various countries, Union ministers, individuals spanning the bureaucracy to the film industry—JNU alumni are making noteworthy contributions across diverse fields. Even after five decades since its establishment, Jawaharlal Nehru University continues to command a prominent position in the list of developed countries worldwide, making it impossible to ignore.

It is unfortunate that the excellent educational tradition of JNU has rarely become a topic of general discussion. Instead, preference has often been given to a handful of slogans on media and social platforms. When the walls of JNU are scrutinised, it is seldom mentioned that this very university houses a "Wall of Heroes" dedicated to the Army. Here, photographs of 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees are prominently displayed. Beyond the sits and protests, there is a broader perspective of the university that encompasses patriotism, the passion to make a difference, and the courage to lead. JNU reflects all the colours of Indian culture.

Students from both large and small States have been studying here. The names of buildings, hostels, roads, and facilities on the campus are drawn from Indian heritage. JNU stands as a representation of excellence with equality, innovation with inclusion, and integrity. Unfortunately, some individuals have used JNU for their own agenda and narrative. It is important to note that JNU does not belong to any specific political spectrum but adheres to an ideological creation tradition where everyone is granted equality; this, in fact, is the strength of JNU. It presents the best cultural and geographical picture of India.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Management and Entrepreneurship, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal)

WAR OF ETHICS: Unravelling complexities in Gaza conflict

The eruption of war between Hamas and Israel, which has claimed thousands of lives and caused massive destruction, raises several insoluble questions to ponder. Following what has been called a terror attack by Hamas in Israel on October 7, the retaliation by the group has resulted in more than 10,000 casualties and unprecedented destruction in the Gaza Strip. The two extremes, with Israel declaring itself "at war" and Hamas cheering the motionless hostages paraded in Gaza, make the chances of a possible ceasefire weak. At a time when international communities are divided on taking sides, the (un)ethical questions surrounding the ongoing war between Hamas and Israel merit discussion.

Should Hamas' attack on Israel be justified? Should Hamas' attack be ignored since Israel's counterattack exceeds the death and destruction? Should Israel be blamed absolutely for its ruthless retaliation?

These questions can possibly be addressed by appealing to standard ethical principles of regular and irregular warfare. Accordingly, the (un)ethical dimensions of the ongoing Israel-Hamas war can be interrogated through both "traditional just war theory" and "contemporary irregular warfare tenet". The rationale for engaging through the above-mentioned theoretical positions can be predicated upon the status of the warring parties: Israel as a nation-state (as seen through the dominant perspective) and Hamas as a non-state actor (although Hamas participates in legislative processes in Palestine).

Despite their contrarian fundamentals, the striking similarity between the above-mentioned theoretical positions is that they come to a consensus on the necessity of a "just cause" (Jus ad Bellum) to initiate a war; nonetheless, they vary in characterising the "just cause."

According to traditional war theory, the "just cause" includes a cluster of aspects such as: a reason that inhibits unjust injury; the right intention that should be delimited to attain the goal of inhibiting unjust injury; likelihood of success, where the possibility of success must be greater than the failure; proportionality, which refers to morally expected advantages overshadowing the morally estimated evil from the war; and the war as the last resort left to achieve the end.

On the contrary, the contemporary asymmetric warfare notion defines "just because" as "that it may permissibly be pursued by means of war, and that the reason why this is so is at least in part that those against whom the war is fought have made themselves morally liable to military attack".

The moral liability to be harmed is acquired through satisfying the purpose, i.e., if that harm is in use to prevent further misconduct or compensation for the victims of previous wrongdoing. The liability to be harmed is not present in the lack of such a goal. Thus, it can be fortified that the liability



Palestinians search for bodies and survivors in the rubble of a residential building destroyed in an Israeli airstrike in Rafah southern Gaza Strip on Friday. PTI

of people to be harmed in a war is based on thwarting the attainment of an unfair cause and protecting people from injuries by unjust combatants in their endeavour to attain an unfair cause. Accordingly, the liability of a person to harm is qualified by the same objective, and thus, the attribution of liability to harm is regulated by the prerequisite of "necessity". The internal relation between necessity and liability confirms that "if harming a person is unnecessary for the achievement of a relevant type of goal, that person cannot be liable to be harmed."

Thus, the moral liability to harm relies on the moral liability to be harmed if it prevents the person from achieving an unjust goal. It is also plausible to invoke the moral principles that are to be followed during the war (Jus in Bello). It includes a set of principles such as differentiation, which demands segregation between combatants and non-combatants; proportionality, which must be upheld between unintentional military harm and military benefits attained; and military necessity, which expects the lowest amount of death and destruction to be aimed for using the least detrimental military means.

Given these moral prescriptions, the attack by Hamas on Israel demands moral accountability. A fundamental question that can be raised is whether Hamas' attack precedes a just cause. The

liability of Hamas to kill thousands and take hostages of hundreds can be verified by the objective that involves preventing the attainment of unjust goals, such as deterring future misconduct or compensating the victims for former delinquency.

However, Hamas outrightly fails to qualify this condition since those civilians are neither aimed at future misconduct nor are they culprits of some other victims for whom the former is supposed to pay compensation. They are innocent civilians and noncombatants and thus seek immunity to be protected from any attack. Hence, Hamas lacks the moral liability to harm Israelis and thus is unethical.

However, according to UN Article 51 (grounded in Just War theory), a war can be initiated on the account of immediate self-defence. Accordingly, the counterattack by Israel may qualify the necessary condition to have a just cause to retaliate against Hamas. Because it is also compensation for the victims who have been harmed by Hamas and can be a deterrent to prevent future delinquency. Thus, Israel might secure its moral stance to this extent. Nonetheless, there are certain prescribed humanitarian rules (Jus in Bello) that should have been followed by Israel in waging a war on Hamas. It is evident that Israel ignores following those rules in terms of indiscriminating combatant liability and noncom-

batant immunity; disproportionality between aimed military benefits and unintentional military harm; and military non-necessity that causes intensive death and destruction, including displacements, by using the most harmful military means. The war is unethical of Israel as is reflected in blocking the supply of food, water, and other essentials for the civilians in Gaza.

Accordingly, it can be safely argued that both sides violate International Humanitarian laws in terms of not protecting civilians through humane treatment and thus commit war crimes. Killing civilians and non-combatants through unanticipated attacks, taking them hostages, and using them as human shields are the war crimes committed by Hamas, which is unethical. However, although Israel satisfies the necessary condition (Jus ad Bellum) to initiate the war, it fails to qualify Jus in Bello and thus lapses into immorality. Apart from anthropomorphic issues, there is a necessity to ponder upon environmental pollution caused by war because nature is already alarmed to reflect upon it and its dire consequences. Thus, any war, whether regular or asymmetric, precedes a meditative rumination about the awful consequences of it.

(The writer is a former Ethical Consultant at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru.)

Both sides stand accused of violating international humanitarian laws, committing war crimes against civilians. Hamas' use of human shields and attacks on non-combatants raise ethical concerns. Meanwhile, Israel's failure to follow rules on combatant liability, proportionality, and military necessity reflects immorality



NIBEDITA JENA

PERSPECTIVE

NURTURING INDIA'S FUTURE

The importance of collective action for ensuring a brighter future for children is crucial for the country's growth, write Sanskriti Chandel, Arfa Monis, and Muddassir Rashid

Children are the future of a country, and it is important that they grow up in an environment where nobody treats them unfairly. To achieve this goal we need to eradicate discrimination in all its forms, paving the way for a society where every child can get equal chance, fulfilling the dream of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Narendra Modi. "The children of today will make the India of tomorrow. The way we bring them up will determine the future of the country," said Nehru.

The dissemination of skills through high-quality education, championing their individual interests, and aiding them in unlocking their vast potential is crucial. It is important to see that they are not forced into the relentless and cut-throat arena of competition, threatening to snatch away the essence of their innocent childhood. While interacting with students during the fifth edition of

Pariksha Pe Charcha at Delhi's Talkatora Stadium, Modi said, "The unfulfilled dreams of parents and teachers should not be forced upon children. They should be allowed to decide their future freely and follow their dreams."

However, the journey toward providing equal opportunities has been marked by its share of challenges, some seemingly insurmountable. The cause of concern for years has been that a lot of children, especially girls, are leaving school early, child labour, early marriage and sexual exploitation.

In 2021-22, more students left school before finishing secondary education in seven States compared to the average for the whole country. Gujarat, Bihar, Karnataka, Assam, and Punjab are some of the States where the number of students dropping out of secondary school was higher than the national average of 12.6 per cent, according to official data sources.



High dropout rates pose a major challenge to achieving the ambitious 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) goal outlined in the new National Education Policy by 2030. Officials stress the importance of addressing this issue to successfully implement the policy's objectives.

Last year, a survey by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) revealed that in some areas, children had to leave school and begin working as labourers alongside their families or doing house cleaning for others. "Children in South Asia face deprivation of basic rights due

to issues such as child labour and trafficking. Within the context of contemporary South Asia the culture of childhood is deeply intertwined with a rich history and traditions," said Jamia Hamdard Vice Chancellor Professor M Afshar Alam this week at an international seminar which drew experts from Bangladesh and Nepal also to the university campus.

There is a strong realisation among experts to safeguard India's future. Convener and chairperson of the Department of Sociology at South Asian University, Dev Nath Pathak, emphasised the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting child rights and social development. The importance of collective action for ensuring a brighter future for children is crucial for the country's growth, as India is home to more than 444 million children, making it one of the places with the most children and teenagers in

the world. Protecting children is a collective responsibility involving States, communities, civil society, and various organisations, explained Farhat Basir Khan, Media Studies Professor at Jamia Hamdard.

It is crucial to tackle the issues children face every day, emphasised Jamia Hamdard Professor Reshma Nasreen. There is a need for collective action for the welfare of children. Taking care of children goes beyond just their bodies — it is important to look after their feelings, thoughts, and spirits too.

When we give them attention and care from the start, we are planting the seeds for a future India with strong and smart leaders. These leaders will be all set to handle whatever comes their way with wisdom and strength.

(The writers are students of Mass Communication, Jamia Hamdard)



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week, prioritize settling any debts or loans. You may encounter requests for financial help from friends or relatives for significant events, and you're well-placed to offer support, whether financial or emotional. Consider participating in charitable activities. Your financial stability inspires dreams of a luxurious life, but mid-week, you might find yourself lost in fantasies and indecision. Although you're drawn to enjoy life's finer aspects - from gourmet dining to elegant fashion and leisurely pursuits - it's crucial to have a clear plan. Avoid being swayed by fleeting whims, as this could lead to dissatisfaction. Instead, set realistic and firm goals. By doing so, you align yourself with a path of health, wealth, and overall well-being. Remember, a clear vision and gratitude pave the way for fulfillment.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Mint
Lucky day Sunday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your environment is charged with energy, action, and reaction, but be mindful that excess can lead to distance, confrontation, and unpleasantness. Colleagues may seek to avoid or challenge you, possibly leading to verbal disagreements or clashes of opinion. Channeling your energy into productive endeavors is essential. Fortunately, you are blessed with good health, a respectable position, and authority. Your prominence in your field is undeniable, but maintaining a harmonious work environment could enhance your achievements even further. However, your dominant nature risks damaging the reputation you've worked hard to establish. It's crucial to wisely utilize your energy in a manner that aligns with higher intentions, balancing your assertiveness with the need for collaborative and positive interactions.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Monday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, you might face a health setback, such as an injury or minor surgery, requiring medical attention and care. Fortunately, you'll have the unwavering support of your spouse during this time. Engaging in spirituality and religious activities will provide strength, and practices like mantras, tantric rituals, and exploration of the occult will bolster your faith and help maintain your inner balance. Surrendering to a higher power, you may discover a more compassionate and humane approach to life. This period also fosters stronger family bonds, particularly with your spouse, encouraging open sharing of thoughts. Some may find solace in religious texts or worship. A sense of healing will prevail throughout the week, culminating in a return to your regular life by the week's end, filled with newfound peace and equilibrium.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Thursday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Embrace your influential role, characterized by strong communication skills, positive attitudes, and effective behavior towards colleagues. Your organizational and leadership skills shine, marking you as a leader in your workplace. You're adept at understanding and responding to the needs of those around you with empathy. Yet, be cautious: not everyone may align with your working style. Some may attempt to challenge or undermine your efforts. Outcomes of important deals or interviews could be unexpectedly influenced by the actions of rivals. Feeling overwhelmed with responsibilities is natural. To alleviate this, consider delegating tasks. This strategy not only lightens your load but also enhances productivity and work-life balance. Remember, effective leadership often involves empowering others to share the workload.

Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour Gray
Lucky day Wednesday



VIRO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week heralds a phase of prosperity, with financial and emotional gains elevating your sense of security and success. You'll find joy in the material world, luxury, and the satisfaction of desires, alongside a harmonious family life. Mid-week, you'll focus on achieving emotional milestones, possibly experiencing meaningful romantic gestures, marriage proposals, or deepening intimacy with your partner. However, this period of contentment may soon give way to feelings of confusion and instability, with a noticeable lack of warmth and affection in various aspects of your life. As the week closes, you'll strive to restore harmony, adapting to new beliefs and perspectives. This realization that life is an evolving journey prompts a reassessment of old norms and traditions.

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Wednesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week, you may find yourself feeling sentimental and emotionally turbulent. Various issues, not aligning with your desires, contribute to this unrest. Your inclination to offer affection and concern might be challenged by circumstances, possibly including health concerns. Specific issues, like menstrual disorders or thyroid problems, could be particularly troubling for some. Financially, it's a time to be cautious and considerate, with a focus on budget control. Mid-week calls for a smart, systematic approach to life, addressing areas like health, wealth, and lifestyle. Adopting a balanced diet and disciplined lifestyle will be beneficial. As the week progresses, expect positive developments in your career. Financial gains are likely, with income potentially arriving from multiple sources, leading to a sense of contentment, happiness, and well-being.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Monday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

After reaping the rewards of your hard work, it's time to stay vigilant and brace for potential conflicts or disagreements in your work environment. You may encounter opposition from someone who perceives themselves as superior, leading to a challenging phase marked by fault-finding, gossip, stiff competition, and verbal disputes. Mid-week, you might find yourself influenced by a negative individual who lacks ethical values, possibly pressuring you into unethical actions not condoned by society. However, your determination and confidence help you navigate these trials successfully. Your commitment to truth and righteousness shines through, leading to recognition and appreciation by week's end. Your high moral stance not only earns you accolades but also enhances your professional standing.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Olive
Lucky day Tuesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Embodying luxury, beauty, romance, and balance, the week elevates you to heights of enjoyment and recognition. Your hard work and determination, coupled with divine blessings, bring you fame and a life of pleasures. You're known for fairness, generosity, and impressive leadership skills. Your pure, selfless nature and adaptability make you a beloved figure, both in personal and professional spheres. Your guidance is valued, and your role as a leader is appreciated by those around you. However, as the week progresses, be mindful of potential financial or health challenges. It's a reminder that even in times of success, staying cautious and prepared is essential. Embrace the week's blessings while being aware of life's unpredictability, ensuring you navigate both triumphs and trials with wisdom.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Maroon
Lucky day Saturday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

At the week's start, you'll need to make tough, emotion-free decisions that could significantly affect your or someone else's life. Strive to remain fair and firm. Work may present competitive challenges; maintaining a calm, submissive approach is advisable to avoid conflicts. Midweek might bring some criticism or negative feedback, potentially affecting your morale. To combat this, focus on activities like yoga and meditation to rebuild confidence and mental stability. It's a crucial time to realign with your goals and dreams. As the week draws to a close, the atmosphere begins to lighten, with negative elements gradually fading. You can look forward to positive developments, possibly including romantic gestures or encouraging news, signaling a shift towards a more hopeful and harmonious phase.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Gold
Lucky day Friday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Beginning the week with action rather than emotion, you'll face a pivotal work opportunity requiring sharp skills and decisive action, promising future benefits. Success depends on clear thought and communication. Mid-week shifts focus to financial dealings, blending your natural empathy with practicality. You'll engage in charitable acts and fulfill financial obligations, like repaying debts. The week's end brings a significant partnership deal, enhancing both professional and personal connections. This period is particularly favorable for strengthening existing relationships or forming new ones. Singles may find opportunities for romance, expressing feelings through thoughtful gestures like gifts or proposals. Overall, the week balances practicality with emotional fulfillment, culminating in a sense of contentment in both love and work.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Navy Blue
Lucky day Saturday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

As your days grow increasingly busy, both your professional commitments and academic pursuits as a student demand your full attention, leading to a need for rest. This period calls for self-healing, rejuvenation, and energy restoration to prepare for future challenges. Overexertion could result in emotional and mental imbalance, possibly leading to irritability. Mid-week, some may experience health issues, such as menstrual disorders, emphasizing the importance of healthcare and regular check-ups. This time also poses a risk of conflicts or arguments with superiors at work. Managing your emotions and prioritizing revitalization are key to navigating this phase smoothly. Without self-care, you risk facing the displeasure of authoritative figures like your boss, father, or elder brother. The period highlights the importance of balancing work with rest and integrating relaxation and entertainment into your busy schedule.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Lavender
Lucky day Monday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week, your childlike energy and impressive work potential are at their peak. However, without clear goals or focused thoughts, your efforts may not yield the desired results. Set a definite target and channel your creative energy constructively. Remember to attend to your family's needs and avoid neglecting any health issues, as prevention is key to avoiding financial losses. Midweek could bring challenges, including potential separations and financial setbacks, leading to strained relationships. Yet, your inner strength and mental resilience will be your pillars of support during this time. The end of the week brings new opportunities, which you might miss if overly focused on personal matters. Engaging in conversations, travel, and pursuits that cater to your emotional needs will be appealing.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Lime
Lucky day Saturday

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ASTROTURF BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Don't get be-fooled by charlatans



tible to quick infection and thereby health issues. So, your son is vulnerable to health issues by birth. A deeper analysis reflects upon weak areas of his health profile. Lagna sub-lord Saturn is tenanted in Gemini sign almost at its fag end. Planets at the junction of Gemini and Cancer make you vulnerable to respiratory problems. The 6th sub-lord Rahu is in fiery sign Aries, marked with

the head, which read together with Mars placed adverse to mind signifying Moon makes him susceptible to headaches. Rahu occupying Aries sign represents Mars, it's lord. Mars being lord of 3rd house (identified with lungs region) and 8th house (indicating difficulties), when read together with lagna-sub-lord signification makes him vulnerable to respiratory problems. Hence asthma. The Sun placed adverse to Jupiter is indicative of liver related issues. In terms of timeline, he would have had health issues beginning close to his 4th year when progressed Lagna reached Ketu's coordinates, and progressed Sun would have become adverse to natal Mars. Again, when he would have been about 16-17 years, progressed lagna would have become adverse to natal Moon, which made him vulnerable to serious health issues. As of now progressed Mars forms favourable alliance

with natal Rahu which is indicative of serious health issues. For, when two planets are placed adverse to each other in natal chart, as and when they form favourable alliance in progressed chart or in transit, they join hands to create problem. In his natal chart Mars is ill-disposed off to Rahu. Since your son's health vulnerability are so clearly indicated with probable timeline, there is no scope for black magic playing any part. Proper treatment alone will help him. "Sir, my son has encountered all the health issues you indicated, and the timeline also matches. But he is in agony. By when would he come out of his problems? Would you suggest any remedial measure to mitigate his suffering?" Let me assure you that your son is running Saturn mahadasha, which indicates health issues, also promises recovery. For, it is also a strong significator of 5th house, which acts as antidote to ailment

signifying 6th house. But antardasha lord Rahu is indicative of baffling diagnosis, which is why doctors have not been able to hit the nail so far. Under such circumstances, often alternative medicines such as Homeopathy or Ayurveda work very well. Particularly in immunity related issues, alternative medicines have been found offering quick relief. Also, he should do pranayama under the guidance of an expert. That will help him tone up the respiratory system, as has been experienced in many cases. You should appreciate that asthma stretches for long, calling for long drawn treatment. Therefore, have patience, he will recover as is promised in his chart. No astrological remedial measure will work, proper health care alone would help recovery. The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com

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